

Creative Writing Tips

There are many things that contribute to effective and engaging creative writing. As well as the principle of 'show, don't tell' some of these include:

Genre and narration	Descriptive language	Sensory language	Figurative devices	Variation in sentences	Dialogue
The overall type of writing or style of story First, Second or Third person.	Strong verbs, adjectives and adverbs that affect meaning when describing people, places, events etc.	Language describing things by appealing to the five senses (touch, sight, sound, taste, smell).	Such as metaphors, similes, personification, etc.	Simple sentences for effect (such as building pace). Complex sentences for effect.	To reveal insights into character and actions.
Principle of 'Show don't Tell'	Suggesting what is taking place instead of stating it explicitly (e.g. "his hands trembled around the lock as it rattled against the cage" is more effective at communicating the character's nerves and situation, rather than simply writing "he was very nervous and his hands trembled on the lock.")				

'Show, don't tell' (adapted from: <https://www.dailywritingtips.com/show-dont-tell/>).

While telling can be useful and sometimes necessary, showing is often much more effective in enhancing a creative writing text, such as a descriptive passage, story, or memoir. Showing allows the reader to follow the author into the moment, to see, feel, and experience what the author has experienced. Using a balance of showing and telling will help to make your writing more interesting and effective.

These tips can help enhance your skills in showing more in your creative writing:

Use dialogue	Dialogue allows the reader to experience a scene as if they were there and can give your reader a great deal about character, emotion and mood.. Instead of telling the reader your mum was angry, they can hear it for themselves: “Justin Michael,” mum bellowed, “Get in here this instant!”
Use sensory language	In order for readers to fully engage with what you are writing about, they need to be able to see, hear, taste, smell and touch the world around them. Try to use language that incorporates several senses.
Be descriptive using strong verbs, adjectives and adverbs	Use strong verbs, adjectives, adverbs. This is about carefully choosing the right words and using them sparingly (don’t overuse adjectives, for example) to convey your meaning. For example: Telling: He sits on the couch holding his guitar. Showing: His eyes are closed and he’s cradling the guitar in his arms like a child. It’s as if he’s trying to hold on to something that wants to let go.
Be specific, not vague	This is about filling the gaps with specific information - think about the description of who, what, where, when, how and sometimes why, in your writing. If you went to the ocean and had a great time, be specific when writing about it: What beach? What time of day? Who with? When did you leave? What did you do? Why did you go? How did you get there? Where was it?

